FAMILY LIFE

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MARITAL HAPPINESS — THEN AND NOW

What proportion of marriages turned out happily in the horse-and-buggy days? Those with a "Golden Age complex" often assume that marriage used to be happy but is now "going to the dogs." Apologists for divorce, on the other hand, sometimes take it for granted that marriage was a miserable affair in the past because custom prevented divorce, and that nowadays people are enabled to free themselves from misery which they would formerly have had to endure without recourse. It ought to be possible to come closer to the facts than mere prejudice, but too little effort has been made to get statistical evidence on this point.

In the course of a recent study for an entirely different purpose, the American Institute of Family Relations accumulated information on 394 marriages which took place 40 years or more ago. They come from all parts of the United States and are perhaps a fair, though small, sample of marriages in the middle class of white Americans toward the end of the last century. The only selection involved was that each marriage produced one child. The childless marriages, which are known to be the least happy in the community, are therefore not represented. On the other hand, studies show that the one-child marriage is, on the average, less happy than those with a larger number of children.

Happiness of these marriages was rated by people who knew them and who returned 239 or 60% as definitely happy, 24% as doubtful, and 16% as definitely unhappy.

With these figures one may compare those published a decade ago by Paul Popenoe and Donna Wicks (Marital Happiness in Two Generations, Mental Hygiene, Apl., 1947.) Of these 4256 marriages, also representing a generation around the turn of the century, 62% were rated as happy, 17% doubtful, and 21% unhappy. The figures are not far out of line with those of the new study above described. Again, they represent only families which had children, the childless and probably less happy marriages (statistically speaking) being excluded by the process of selection.

If it be assumed that, back in the horse and buggy days, at least 60% of the marriages that produced at least one child were definitely happy, how does that compare with the findings of today?

Various studies indicate that, at least up to World War II, from 60 to

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75% of the marriages in the educated part of the population were rated as happy. Data on these marriages will be found in the appendix to the revised edition of Paul Popenoe's "Modern Marriage," and in the well-known surveys of L. M. Terman and of E. W. Burgess and Leonard Cottrell, Jr.

It would probably be a fair inference to say that there is no marked difference between the proportion of happy marriages in the decade before World War II, and the period around half a century previously.

Figures of recent years showing one divorce for every three or four marriages in the nation must not be misinterpreted. They mean exactly what they say, namely, that one marriage in every three or four ends in divorce. This is not the same as saying that one married person out of every three or four will go into the divorce court. Many of these divorces represent repeaters, some of whom appear in the census over and over again. One man with four marriages and three divorces (and such men are not hard to find) will counterbalance, in the statistics, three men who wed monogamously and successfully.

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NOTES FROM THE AIFR

"Heredity and environment as related to alcoholism" is a 4-page reprint (Eugenical News, Sept., 1946) of a paper by Paul Popenoe. Any reader interested in the subject can get a copy free by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the AIFR office.

More than 100 persons from nine different states attended the Institute in Family Life Education which the AIFR offered at the University of Cincinnati during the week June 23-28, in collaboration with the Cincinnati Social Hygiene Society. Ministers, social workers, teachers, physicians and nurses made up most of the group.

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EDUCATIONAL NOTES

Third annual marriage institute at Pennsylvania State College is tentatively set for Sept. 13-15, 1947. Dr. Clifford R. Adams is the director.

Fourth annual conference on the Small Community was held in Yellow Springs, Ohio, July 25-31, 1947. One of its purposes is to promote conditions in which sound family life will be possible.

Claud C. Ruch is chairman of the committee to get out a newsletter for the National Committee for Parent Education, which has been reorganized with offices now at 221 W. 57th St., New York 19, N. Y.

Free list of popular publications is now offered by the National Mental Health Foundation, Inc., 1520 Race St., Philadelphia 2, Pa.

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SCHOOL FOR PARENTS

Radio talks by Dr. S. R. Laycock of the University of Saskatchewan have been brought together by the Ryerson Press, Toronto, under the general title of "School for Parents". Three booklets are already available: Family Team Work (40 cts.), Cheating Your Children (50 cts.) and Emotional Climate in the Home (50 cts.). Like everything written by Dr. Laycock, these are sound, practical, and worthy of wide distribution.

MAKING THE HOME PRODUCTIVE

To strengthen the American family, give it something to do!

This is the prescription of Mrs. Ada Bull, whose letter to the Town Meeting Family Contest is printed in the May 15 issue of The Interpreter.

The family can be strengthened, she declares, only "by making it a responsible, functioning, productive center; by bringing into it the vital activities that make a home truly creative." As the Machine Age spread its patterns ever more widely, "We have taken out of the home everything that has to do with living. You can't be born there, die there, be buried from there; can't be taught there, be sick there; you can't work there nor learn a skill; and entertainment must be found elsewhere. What is there left but a lifeless dormitory where one changes one's clothes and where food prepared elsewhere is served?"

What can we do about it? "In general we can make our home the place where it is fun to produce at least some of the things we consume."

"Mere consuming does not bind people together, nor bind them to their home," Mrs. Bull asserts. Immense amounts of money and energy are attempting to make the schools substitute for the home; to set up an artificial Youth Movement which will help to replace the home; to divert the energies of juvenile delinquents into new channels because there is nothing for them to do in their homes. "Not a word about bringing these activities back into the home, among loved ones!"

Such activities are better adapted to a farm home than to a city tenement; but Mr. and Mrs. Bull have made their own apartment at 64 Clark St., Brooklyn, N. Y., a center for many creative activities. However, they are also developing a homestead at Nazareth, Pa.

"You may think," says Mrs. Bull, "that it doesn't pay to be your own handy-man and dressmaker; to do your own furniture repairs and interior decorating; to mend shoes and make soap; to make Christmas gifts and greeting cards or a score of other things you can do at home with your family. I don't say it will pay at first. But it is fun. There is no better entertainment.

"In the productive home the watchword is **make** instead of **buy** and the home becomes a family workshop where sociability, humor, education, religion, and industry meet. That is what it takes to make the family vital and strong."

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TEACHERS' FAMILIES

At last report five cities of more than 30,000 population were paying family allowances to teachers. Policy varied greatly: it might be payable to either men or women; might include dependent husband or wife, or apply only to dependent children. At least 11 other cities reported a differential salary scale in favor of married men, the average being about $300 extra. Nearly 60 smaller cities were stated to be paying some sort of family allowance to teachers who had family responsibilities.

STERILITY IN MARRIAGE

More than a million married couples in the United States are permanently childless against their will. At least one-third of these could be rendered fertile by modern methods of treatment. Possibilities are discussed in a book, "Diagnosis in Sterility," which prints the proceedings of a conference sponsored by the National Committee on Maternal Health. (Pp.238, price $5.50 from Charles C. Thomas, publisher, Springfield, Ill., 1946.) While the volume is entirely technical, the outsider can get from it an idea of the present state of expert opinion.

In most marriages there is no single cause of sterility. Two or more causes are noted in the average case and "causative or contributory factors occurred simultaneously in husband and wife in 28%" of a series studied by William H. Cary. Treatment in any case therefore involves study of both husband and wife.

Treatment of the husband is admittedly unsatisfactory. Many of his difficulties go back to childhood or adolescent diseases. But a wide range of factors may depress the production of spermatozoa, so good results are often obtained merely by insistence on more outdoor life and exercise, improvement of diet, and "taking it easy."

General opinion of the experts is that treatment with sex hormones is much less effective, in every way, than the public has been led to suppose. In fact, it was pointed out by Allan T. Kenyon that the administration of testosterone sometimes prevents the production of spermatozoa altogether; and that it also has little effect in increasing sexual potency.

In woman many of the diffculties are constitutional. "Although the male seems fairly well adjusted to the upright posture," John Rock commented, "the female is not at all. From the gynecologic point of view she really ought to be going along on all fours. There would be, then, very much less pelvic congestion"!

Participants in the conference agreed on the remarkable ignorance concerning sex and reproduction that is found even among otherwise well educated married persons, and on the need of better sex education in the schools. Much sterility is certainly due to mental, or more correctly emotional, states.

Most discouraging prospects are those in which the wife has had serious illness or surgical operation that affected the reproductive organs. But the increased refinement of methods of diagnosis and the rapidly expanding range of treatments bring children to many a couple who, only a few years ago, could have had no hope of parenthood.

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AROUND THE WORLD

Position of women in India will be changed markedly if legal reforms proposed by the Hindu Law Committee of the Central Assembly are adopted. The changes are supported by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and other leaders. They give either husband or wife the right of divorce on such grounds as insanity and dangerous cruelty, and give the wife right of divorce after five years' desertion. Daughters are given an inherent right to a portion of their father's property,

except land. At present they can claim nothing. Inheritance rights are guaranteed to the offspring of inter-caste marriages and monogamy is made the rule of law.

Primary object of the Southern Rhodesia Social Hygiene Council is "to preserve and strengthen the family as the basic social unit." Its headquarters are at 29 Mimosa House, Buluwayo. Plans are now under way to set up a Marriage and Guidance Council there.

Included in the "Family Relations Group," which has been established in England as a clearing house to correlate the interests of organizations concerned with the family from different points of view, are the British Social Hygiene Council, the Central Council for Health Education, the Eugenics Society, the Family Planning Association, the Family Welfare Association, the Marriage Guidance Council, the National Council for Maternity and Child Welfare, and the Pioneer Health Centre.

Poland has set up rehabilitation centers for women with children but without husbands, who survived the war. The object is to combine working for a living, home-making, and bringing up their children intelligently. Five hours' work a day make such centers self-supporting.

Graduates of the family relations class at the Far Eastern University (Manila, P. I.) are organized into a sorority, Omicron Tau, by Professor Francisco Carino, instructor of the class. They take a pledge to give their best to home-making.

In Rumania, employees and laborers in private industrial and commercial enterprises have been entitled to a family bonus since July 1, 1944.

Caracas, Venezuela, has been selected for the Ninth Panamerican Child Congress, Jan. 5-10, 1948.

In Uruguay a private organization, the National Foundation of Friends of the Farm Child, has undertaken to reorganize rural education and improve the social life of ranch families. Child and family together will be tied into "a vast plan of social action."

Sterilization of hereditary defectives and sex delinquents in Mexico is urged by Maria Luisa Arriaga Galindo, in a book on the subject just published by Editorial Claridad, Mexico City. ☆

INEXPENSIVE PAMPHLETS

A WOMAN'S PLACE IS—WHERE? Useful 12-page outline for discussion groups, on "woman's work" and her participation in community life. Price 10c from National Institute of Social Relations, 1029 17th St., NW., Washington 6, D. C.

HUMAN RELATIONS—a challenge to our public schools. Ed. by Frank E. Karelsen, Jr. This 74-page pamphlet analyzes replies of 123 experts, to an inquiry concerning the efficiency of modern education. Obtainable from Mr. Karelsen, 230 Park Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

GUIDING THE ADOLESCENT. Pp. 83, price 15c from U. S. Govt. Printing Office, Washington, D. C. (Pub. No. 225, revised 1946.) A standard handbook prepared by the Children's Bureau.

WHEN YOU MARRY, 7-page mimeographed pamphlet for ministers to give to those who are about to wed; contains useful analysis of factors making for successful marriage. Send 5c to Newell Edson, executive secretary, Erie Social Hygiene Assn., 133 W. 7th St., Erie, Pa.

NEW BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

STUDIES OF TEACHERS' CLASSROOM PERSONALITIES, III. Follow-up studies of the effects of dominative and integrative contacts on children's behavior. Applied Psychology Monographs of the American Psychological Assn., No. 11, Dec., 1946. Pp.156, price $2 from Stanford University (Calif.) Press.

Father and mother are accustomed to being told that "There are no bad children — only bad parents." They are frequently told so by unmarried teachers and social workers. They have become so accustomed to being put in the wrong that some of them take it for granted this is so. At best, however, it is not the whole truth! There are bad parents—thanks partly to the failure of the school to give them any training for parenthood; but there are also bad politicians, novelists, movie producers, publishers, saloonkeepers, and 10,000 other categories—even bad teachers! Harold H. Anderson and Joseph E. Brewer have benn studying some of the latter and in this monograph, with the assistance of Mary Frances Reed, they try to find out what a "bossy" teacher does to her pupils, as compared with the results in a classroom where the teacher helps the pupils to feel that they are a group working together in a common enterprise. Two classrooms in the second grade of an elementary school are studied with much technical detail. Year after year, the dominating teacher succeeded in stifling spontaneity and initiative and intensifying conflict and misunderstanding in her room. It would take unusually competent parents to undo, every evening, the harm she had done their offspring during the day! The integrative teacher, on the other hand, worked with her children instead of against them and as time went on the children worked better with each other. Most readers will agree with the authors of this monograph, that teachers, like other people, need more training in mental hygiene, both in their daily life and as part of their in-service training.

GENETICS, MEDICINE, AND MAN, by H. J. Muller, C. C. Little, and L. H. Snyder. Pp.158, price $2.25 from Cornell University Press, Ithaca, N. Y., 1947.

Three outstanding American geneticists present this series of six lectures on the facts and principles of heredity and the application of this knowledge to human health and welfare. The mechanical age of man has culminated in release of the forces of the atom, says Dr. Little, but we are only on the threshold of the biological age. Better understanding in this direction will sweep away "the fallacious concept of the equality or similarity of all men" and current ideas of "the omnipotence of environmental factors. It will also eventually show man what are the permanent, recognizable, and controllable tools with which he can eradicate or forestall the inroads of many undesirable physical, emotional, and psychological traits. In so doing genetics will steadily exert a highly desirable pressure on human thought in the direction of unselfish interest in and attention to coming generations and the future welfare of mankind." Readers will need some previous knowledge of biology to get

the most out of this scholarly book.

DON'T LET YOUR MARRIAGE FAIL!, by John H. Mariano. Pp.64, paper covered, price $1 from the Council on Marriage Relations, 110 E. 42nd St., New York 17, N. Y., 1947.

Mr. Mariano is apparently an attorney, and he has contributed two other books, in rapid succession, to the discussion of modern marriage. The present pamphlet is well-intentioned, but adds nothing to the subject. It is made up largely of generalities and platitudes.

HEALTH FACTS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS, by Maude Lee Etheredge. Pp.438, price $2.50 from W. B. Saunders Co., West Washington Square, Philadelphia 5, Pa., 1947.

Popularity of this standard textbook is indicated by its appearance in a fifth and revised edition. It includes chapters on heredity, reproduction, mental hygiene, friendship, love, preparation for marriage, marriage, the home, and parenthood.

OFF TO A GOOD START, by Irma Simonton Black. Pp.256, price $2.50 from Harcourt, Brace & Co., 383 Madison Ave., New York 17, N. Y., 1946.

Popularity of this "Handbook for Modern Parents" is attested by its appearance in a fifth printing. It deals primarily with the small child.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF EGO-INVOLVEMENTS, by Muzafer Sherif and Hadley Cantril. Pp.525, price $6 from John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 440 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N. Y., 1947.

This is a study of the growth of social attitudes and identifications. The ego is gradually organized during childhood, and largely re-formed in adolescence. It must fit into social life successfully or else run the risk of breaking down. The authors devote one chapter to such breakdowns and a final chapter to a critical discussion of psychoanalysis. Freud and his followers tended to think of the ego as established early in life as a result of close family influences and particularly the relationship with the parents (Oedipus complex, etc.). The authors of this book give more weight to community influences in general, assign more importance to adolescent experiences than do most analysts, and generally emphasize the close relationship between the individual's personality and the continually changing world in which this exists. They make out a strong case against the too narrow and rigid Freudian concepts.

THE PRACTICE OF SEX EDUCATION, by Eustace Chesser and Zoe Dawe. Pp.223, price $3 from Roy Publishers, 25 W. 45th St., New York 19, N. Y., 1946.

This English book is now made available in an American edition. Subtitled "a plain guide for parents and teachers," it contains 70 pages of general discussion of sex education by Dr. Chesser; the rest of the book (by Miss Dawe) is a detailed and illustrated outline of human anatomy and physiology and of reproduction among both plants and animals. This section was originally intended as a basis for chalk-talks, and would not accord with the ideas of every teacher: there seems to be little gained, for instance, in attempting to describe the uterus by saying that "it is rather like the mouth with all the hard parts taken away"!

WHY WE ACT AS WE DO, by Philip Eisenberg. Pp. 261, price $3 from Alfred A. Knopf, 501 Madison Ave., New York 10, N. Y., 1946.

"What psychologists know about our behavior and how we can use this information better to understand ourselves and solve our personal problems"—so says the book's cover. It is one of the better popularizations of psychology. Dr. Eisenberg is an extreme environmentalist — for instance, "in both animals and in men, instincts are fictions." He accepts some dubious evidence, ignores other good evidence, in discussing the question of intelligence; and his own prejudices crop out occasionally. But any reader will get some useful ideas, interestingly presented.

PARENTS' QUESTIONS AND HELPFUL ANSWERS, by the staff of the Child Study Assn. of America. Pp.256, price $3 from Harper & Bros., 49 E. 33rd St., New York 16, N. Y., 1947.

This is a revised edition of a book that has been a stand-by for the past decade. It supports the position that the successful rearing of children depends not on mechanical "training," but on the daily interaction of the personalities who make up the family. A postscript offers "New vistas for the family," calling for more cooperation among parents.

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RESEARCH NOTES

"Migration from farms to towns and cities is seriously upsetting the ratios of the sexes, creating a deficit of males in the cities and a vast surplus in the country," say Lowry Nelson and Hazel Clampitt, who have been studying the population of Minnesota. "In the age-group 20-24 in 1940 there were 147 farm men per 100 farm women, and in the cities there were only 82 men per 100 women." Presumably young women are most apt to leave the farms and go to the cities to get work. By doing so, they reduce their chance of marriage. (Bull. 387, Agric. Exp. Station, University of Minnesota, 1945.)

In the study of children's brain waves, "strong evidence of sex difference was noted in the patterns," Margaret Meigs comments in Child Study (Spring, 1947).

The average completed family, in the U. S., now consists of 3.1 children born about 2 years apart, says Paul C. Glick; "hence a period of only about 4½ years elapses between the birth of the first and the birth of the last child, as a rule." "Among women who had married and completed their period of fertility (45-49 years of age) by 1940, 15.4% had had no children. For 1890 the corresponding figure was only half as large, 7.9%." "The average parents of our day will live to see their children married but also will have one-fourth of their married life still to come when the last child leaves home." The average widow is now expected "to live on after her husband's death for about 13 years, to age 74." (American Sociological Review, April, 1947.)

Among British Jews, one in every eight is now marrying into the Christian group, Eliot Slater reports from study of a very small sample (50) in the British army. In a majority of cases, the children of these Jewish-Christian marriages were not brought up in the Jewish faith. Dr. Slater points out that a study by E. W. Burgess and P. Wallin in the United States showed a much higher rate of mixed marriage. Among the 941 engaged couples studied by these investigators were 177 Jews and 185 Jewesses, but only 17% of these had betrothed them-

selves to co-religionists. If such a rate of intermarriage were general, Dr. Slater comments, it would lead to the virtual disappearance of the Jewish group in the United States within two generations.

Late baldness and early baldness are inherited separately, says H. H. Harris after studying 900 men, of whom 120 showed premature baldness. Each seems to behave as a simple dominant. (Annals of Eugenics, 1946.)

Building good roads would not ordinarily be expected to reduce the birth rate of the area, but that is the effect found in Kentucky, where the fertility and migration of the state's population has been studied by Merton D. Oyler (Bulletin 469, Ky. Agric. Exp. Station). Better communications led to an increase in farm income, and "the higher the average farm income, the lower the population fertility rate." Increasing high school attendance also lowers the birth rate, partly because some girls delay marriage in order to graduate, partly because, the girls with high school education seem to want smaller families.

Using a free association scale which was found to make a fairly good index of masculinity and feminity, Florence L. Goodenough reports that "marked non-conformity in the responses characteristic of one's own sex is associated with personal unhappiness or social difficulties." (Science 104:451-6, 1946.)

In Missouri high schools 302 girls were given a scale measuring family adjustment. Half of the girls' mothers were working outside the home. These girls made significantly poorer scores than those whose mothers did not work outside the home, M. Essig and D. H. Morgan report in the Journal of Educational Psychology, 37-219-233, 1946.

Studying responses of 22 female and 8 male chimpanzees in 120 standard situations, D. O. Hibb found that "The male appears to be a fighter and bluffer, but can be bluffed; the female may be treacherous, but is harder to bluff consistently." (Bulletin of the Canadian Psychological Association 6:56-58, 1946.)

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MARRIAGE STUDY

Conventionality and sociability are the items most predictive of happiness in a study of more than 500 married couples by Dr. Harvey J. Locke, sociologist of the University of Southern California.

Of those subsequently divorced, one-fourth were married by a justice of the peace, while only one-eighth of the happy marriages came from the justice court.

Of 146 divorcees who had married again, 76% rated the second marriage as happy or very happy. About one-fourth of the couples who got divorces gave average combined scores of intermediate or fair happiness in the first marriage. Most of these (88%) gave some specific factor as responsible for the divorce. Adultery, drink, in-laws, and menopause were mentioned most frequently. It appears that competent counseling might have prevented many of these divorces.

As in other studies, church attendance was found to be markedly associated with successful marriage—one of the evidences of that "conventionality" which Dr. Locke emphasizes. A preliminary report on his study is published in the American Sociological Review, April, 1947.

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF FAMILY RELATIONS

The American Institute of Family Relations is the first organized attempt in the United States to bring all the resources of modern science to bear on the promotion of successful marriage. It was incorporated in 1930 as a non-profit undertaking, and all its services are available to the public at a minimum cost.

Through lectures, conferences, and discussion groups, the Institute carries on an active and continuous educational program. A circulating library provides the public with recent and important books. A correspondence course in the principles, techniques, and materials of counselling makes the experience of the Institute available to those at a distance, who are called upon to lead, advise, or instruct others in dealing with their personal and family problems.

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